

TO : 25X1A
FROM : 25X1A
SUBJECT: An Approach to Intelligence Production Planning.

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I. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON "PLANNING."

Nearly every large group (institution, military force, etc.) has to have a "plan" to regulate and coordinate its work. Traditionally a "plan" is conceived as a document defining the MISSION of the institution (the group effort that is being planned), analytically breaking the mission down into component TASKS to be performed, and assigning the tasks one by one to the several component FORCES available in the group. An "intelligence production plan," according to this usage, should define the mission of the "national (CIA) intelligence" effort and describe the tasks involved with sufficient precision to permit assignment of specific tasks to CIA and to other intelligence agencies.

It is important to note that in many fields of comprehensive and complex planning (e.g., broad or "grand" strategic planning by the armed forces), there seldom exists a comprehensive "plan" in the form of a single document. The comprehensive "plan" is simply the general content of the formal deliberations and informal understandings of several planning staffs (e.g., Joint Strategic Plans Group of JCS and Planning Committee of Department of State) as that content might be summarized at any one time. In other words, planning is a continuous process going on in the minds of the planners. A single documentary "plan," if it should exist, would be simply a projection of that continuous process onto paper for the purpose of examining it critically and using it for regulating subordinate activities. In short, a comprehensive "plan" on paper is a cross-section of continuous planning as summarized for review or study at any one time. Naturally planning or a "plan" thus conceived will be definite and specific with respect to what is planned for the next month, less definite and less specific for what is planned with respect to the period two-to-six-months in the future, and very indefinite and unspecific with respect to what is planned for the period beyond six months in the future. An "intelligence production plan" regulating the comprehensive and complex activities of CIA and the other intelligence agencies is likely to have these characteristics.

It is also important to note that planning the work of a large institution seldom has been effective unless it was done by some of the most able and experienced workers engaged in the particular activity being planned. Planning is part of doing work, the first

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phase and an inseparable phase of doing work. It cannot be neglected if work is to proceed in an orderly and efficient fashion, but it cannot be divorced from the actual work and the actual workers if plans are to be of any use in regulating the work of the institution. In the field of "intelligence production," then, "intelligence production planning" is the first phase of the normal work of the intelligence producers. There should be a clearly understood assignment of centralized responsibility for such planning in CIA, and this responsibility should be assigned to professionally competent, substantively informed intelligence producers, part of whose duty would be to keep in close touch with the substantive intelligence work of the agency.

II. DEFINITION OF MISSION.

In the light of the foregoing observations about "planning" in general, the specific job of "national (CIA) intelligence production planning" may be attacked in three phases. The first phase is the definition of the mission of the "national (CIA) intelligence" effort. This mission must be described in sufficient detail and with sufficient precision to identify the main component tasks. The second phase is to complete the analytical breakdown of component tasks, carrying it out to the degree of detail and precision appropriate to each kind of component task. The final phase, of course, is assignment of forces to accomplish specific tasks, and is less an intellectual problem than an administrative one.

In an effort to escape the confusion resulting from conflicting uses of jargon, I submit the following "anatomy" of the intelligence process. It comprises phase "one" of "intelligence production planning," i.e., the definition of the mission of the "national (CIA) intelligence" effort insofar as it relates to the activities of ORE. The difficulties in defining the mission are mainly semantic. Most competent intelligence officers have a pretty good idea of the intelligence process, but they use different sets of words to describe it. Consequently, this "anatomy" uses a number of sets of words, scrupulously relating them with one another. Some words are interchangeable and some are not. The careful use of any of these sets of words to define the mission of the "national (CIA) intelligence" effort will provide the basis for phase "two" of planning, the breakdown into detailed or at least specific tasks.

III AN ANATOMY OF THE INTELLIGENCE PROCESS

General System
of Identification
of Component
Tasks

Parallel Categories and Sub-categories of Component Tasks in the Process

	Category #1*	Category #2*	Category #3*
Time	The Historical Past (The accumulated body of Knowledge)	The Fleeting Historical Present (Continuous, piecemeal Accretion of Knowledge)	The Probable Future (Projection of Knowledge into future)
Function	Descriptive-Analytical: Collation, Research, and Analysis of Significant Patterns or Trends in World Affairs, usually with Analysis of Bearing of Significant Patterns or Trends on US Security Interests	Repertorial A: Brief Report of New or Newly Revealed Events or Situations ("Spot" information).	Repertorial B: Preliminary Estimate of Character and Scope of Change in Significant Patterns or Trends as Altered by New Events or Situations
25X1A Report** Classification of CIA Media of Dissemination	ORE & IM: Group D (Background Study: Historical Analysis of Situation without Estimate of Future form and nature of the Patterns and Trends Revealed) NIS SR	CIA Daily	Estimative: Synthesis of Significant Patterns or Trends in World Affairs, Contingent Prediction of future form and nature of these patterns or trends, and Estimate of their Future Bearing on US Security Interests
		CIA Weekly ORE & IM: Group E ("Spot" Reports)	ORE & IM: Group A (Analysis of Situation and Its Bearing on US Security Interests with an Estimate of Future Situation and Bearing on US Security Interests) ORE & IM: Group B (Analysis of Selected Factors in a Situation and Their Bearing on US Security Interests with an Estimate of Selected Factors in Future Situations and Their Bearing on US Security Interests) ORE & IM: Group C(1) (Estimate of Future Consequences of Hypothetical Action)
* In the language of the NSCID's, there is a vague correspondence between Category #1 and "Basic" Intelligence, between Category #2 and "Current" Intelligence, and between Category #3 and "Staff" Intelligence. This terminology has been worn out with thoroughly ambiguous usage, and accordingly has been dropped in this "anatomy."		ORE & IM: Group C(2) (Estimate of Future Consequences of Real Action)	
** The 25X1A Report Classification of CIA Media of Dissemination anatomized intelligence in two broad categories, described as "Reporting, Reviewing, Analytical Intelligence (roughly equivalent to Category #1 and Category #2 of this "Anatomy") and "Synthesizing, Estimating" Intelligence (roughly equivalent to Category #3 in this "Anatomy."		Division Working Papers CIA Monthly	

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IV. ANALYTICAL BREAKDOWN OF COMPONENT TASKS IN THE INTELLIGENCE PROCESS.

Accepting the identification of main component tasks as listed under Categories #1, #2, and #3 in the foregoing "anatomy" table, there is considerable variation from category to category with respect to the problem of further breaking down the tasks in detail and drafting a production plan. Thence stems most of the confusion about proper procedure in "intelligence production planning."

To dispose of the simplest case first, in Category #2, there can be no planning beyond establishing media for dissemination of this kind of intelligence and encouraging regular informal conferences among the intelligence analysts who sift through the daily accretion of "spot" information. This kind of planning is being carried on adequately.

On the other extreme, in Category #1, production planning can be comprehensive and detailed. Essentially a plan for this category will be an encyclopedic cross-index of all the nations, regions, or blocs in the world with all the topics of general political, economic, and military significance. The NIS basic outline is an example of the comprehensive and detailed character of this category of intelligence production and the plan for it. It is a summary of all the information that is of use in national intelligence production rather than of direct use to US national policy makers. The outline or "plan" is relatively static because it describes an accumulated body of knowledge. Keeping intelligence studies of this kind up to date merely means revising the material periodically to introduce new information. The "plan" remains the same. Perhaps the NIS basic outline should be revised, but something like it, perhaps the outline of the SR series, is the "plan" for Category #1 intelligence and is in existence.

For the most part ORE production probably should partake of little of the nature of Category #1 intelligence. For certain purposes, however, when the emphasis in intelligence studies is on the present bearing of significant patterns or trends in world affairs on US security interests, a simple "production plan" would be useful. In effect it would be a priority listing of a comparatively few general topics and a comparatively few nations or power-blocs of major significance in US policy-planning. It is this latter kind of production plan that D/FE and D/LA have been directing their efforts toward. If kept brief, such topical listings are useful as priority guides for directing the work of analysts in CIA as well as farming out work to other intelligence agencies. If extended, of course, they become variants of the NIS basic outline.

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A working group of the committee seized of the "production planning" problem can in a few weeks put together an outline priority guide of this kind, coordinated within ORE and ready for coordination with the other intelligence agencies. Essentially it will embrace, as D/WE [REDACTED] suggests, "foreign conditions or emerging situations which may affect US security or US vital interests." What the committee should produce for this guide, which would have to be revised at least quarterly, would consist of two lists. First, it would contain a list of topics comprising the aspects of foreign conditions or emerging situations that probably would affect US security and vital interests. With this list would be a list of the major nations, regions, or blocs in the world, indicating roughly the priority of their significance to US security and vital interests. In what detail the definition of "security" and "interests" would need to be spelled out explicitly is a matter for discussion.

The effort should be to have one priority guide, not several, and the guide should represent insofar as possible the global common denominator of the priority suggestions of each area Division in ORE. D/LA obviously would like to work out its priority guide in terms of US "interests," and might persuade the committee to adopt this system for all areas or permit a special sub-section of the priority guide for D/LA. Other Divisions might have similar special problems. But the composite guide or "plan" should have global coverage. It should lay down a "plan" or priority for a period of about a year and should be revised at least quarterly. The EPB or some agent with delegated authority should be responsible for approving this "plan" or priority guide and keeping it up to date. It would constitute the first portion of the overall "intelligence production plan."

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In a sense policy-makers "need" all the kinds of information that fall into Category #1, because they will need intelligence reports based on all this information. But submission of a detailed NIS-type outline to top policy-makers for approval would be useless because it would have no relevance to the specific problems confronting them. Submission of a priority guide--the first half of a "production plan"--also would be useless. This would be true partly because it would be so general in content that policy-makers never would have any grounds on which specifically they could approve or disapprove. It would be true partly because this part of the "plan" would refer to intelligence needs that would continue over a period of a year's duration and policy-makers usually are thinking in terms of a specific issue that needs to be settled within a month or at least within a few months.

Because the US national policy-makers are usually preoccupied with immediately urgent problems which they treat in specific terms, the job of planning production in Category #3, which should bulk very large in ORE's work, is of an entirely different character. Here is where the specific "needs" of policy-makers enter the picture. Anticipation of these "needs" must come from two sources: 1) a careful scanning of the significant patterns and trends in world affairs, particularly new or newly discovered situations with a direct bearing on US security interests, with a view to contingent prediction of their future form and nature, as well as their future bearing on US security interests; 2) continuous formal or informal liaison with the staff element at policy-making levels of the government (principally NSC staff, JCS staff, and Dept/State Planning Staff). This process, which is the first phase and an inseparable phase of producing estimative (Category #3) intelligence, must be continuous. It must go on in the minds of the intelligence officers concerned with substantive production. At any one time a cross-section of the composite judgment of a representative group of intelligence officers, globally competent and with adequate liaison with policy staffs, would constitute a specific schedule of projects defined by topic and/or nation, region, or bloc.

If put on paper, this cross-section of the judgment of the intelligence analysts would be a "plan" for Category #3 intelligence. It would have to be revised weekly or perhaps semi-monthly to be of any use. Its coverage would extend to a period of between three months and a year. In the "plan" as put on paper at any one time, the projects listed for the ensuing month would be specific and concrete. It would be to a considerable extent a "schedule" of production and, with the addition of recent, unforeseen specific requests from policy-makers, an actual "schedule" of production in process. It would become less specific, less a "schedule" and more a "plan" for the second month, and successively more general month by month into the future until it was virtually indistinguishable in content from the priority guide kind of "plan" produced for Category #1 intelligence.

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This "plan" for Category #3 intelligence would be, speaking precisely, a "tentative schedule of projects." The committee seized of the problem of intelligence production planning could in a few weeks make a "tentative schedule of projects," working with the actual schedules and improvising in lieu of analyzing the results of actual liaison with policy staffs. The reliability and usefulness of this "tentative schedule of projects" would vary with the competence and imagination of the group of intelligence officers entrusted with revising it regularly. This group could also be assigned the job of keeping up to date the "priority guide," which would need revision less frequently. In any event, put the priority guide, which we have called the first part of a production plan, together with a tentative schedule of projects, which would then constitute the second part, and you have an "intelligence production plan" with the component tasks broken down in sufficient detail to permit assignment of tasks to the forces available--i.e., CIA and the other intelligence agencies.

V. ASSIGNMENT OF TASKS TO AVAILABLE FORCES.

If a prototype intelligence production plan prepared by this committee should be perpetuated by a competent group of professional intelligence officers in CIA (ORE), an administrative aspect of this group's work would be the assignment of various of the component tasks (or various aspects of them) to the other intelligence agencies. Thus a great deal of Category #1 intelligence is farmed out at present, and the same principle would apply for farming out certain units in the general priority guide part of the production plan.

Coordinating the priority guide and the tentative schedule of projects with the other intelligence agencies would reveal a great deal about the capability and intent of the other agencies with respect to shouldering some of the burden of work. In assigning specific tasks or aspects of tasks, the authority of D/CI would have to be invoked and regular procedures followed, but the ORE professional group or unit responsible for production planning would have to keep in touch with the process and adjust their production plans accordingly.

As part of a plan on paper, the assignment of tasks would be simply some coded indication of primary responsibility for the several listings in the priority guide and the tentative schedule of projects. Presumably CIA (ORE) would wish to take primary responsibility for the most comprehensive national intelligence projects of the estimative (Category #3) type, farming out projects of narrower scope in Category #3 and farming out as much of all Category #1 intelligence work as in practice proved feasible.